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HERITAGE

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INTERPRETATION

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As 1989 is Food and Farming Year, this issue focusses on the interpreting of farms and farming.

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FARM INTERPRETATION

BILL BREAKELL

Farm Parks Manager, CWS.

It's not quite the oldest profession, but it's certainly Britain's biggest industry and one that for centuries has been under attack from different quarters. The country's 250,000 farms are yet again being forced to take stock and try to get some of the record straight about such a visible part of the life of Britain.

For many years interpretation has been looking at all aspects of the countryside, but often overlooking the most significant part of the countryside and certainly that which has had arguably the greatest impact on the landscape - farming.

Interpretation of farming has often ridden on the back of other stories. There are examples of good farm interpretation which date back fifteen or twenty years, but with one or two exceptions, interpretation has not been undertaken by the farmer himself.

But 1989 is a year which will probably see a great change in agricultural interpretation. Firstly it is the Year of Salmonella and the Year of Listeria. It also happens to be British Food and Farming Year.

Shell's new guide 'Farms to Visit in Britain' lists 150 farms which provide a degree of interpretation, but there are hundreds more which provide on-site information (often in the form of the farm's best potential interpreter, the farmer himself). Then you can add the Rare Breeds Farms, Farm Trails, City Farms, Rural Museums and the far-reaching plans for a National Museum of Food and Farming.

So perhaps the story of Britain's agriculture - for so long the Cinderella of interpretation - is about to be given a higher profile. The need couldn't be greater for some honest information with farming issues having recently been out of the headlines for the past five months.

Set-aside, diversification, conservation, farm tourism, food production techniques and hygiene, European policies, government grant aid ... all topics which are now being tackled - somewhat belatedly - by farm interpreters.

BIGGEST AND BRIGHTEST NEW FARM PARK

Although far from typical, Britain's biggest farmer, the Co-operative Wholesale Society, is now looking carefully and creatively at its 38,000 productive acres

from the north of Scotland to southern England.

First significant interpretive venture for the CWS is at Stoughton just outside Leicester. Here a million pound capital programme has restored an early nineteenth century farm complex, added new landscape features (including a lake), and developed a mix of interpretation, catering and retail facilities aimed at attracting well over 100,000 visitors in its opening season.

The 25 acre Farm Park sits within the 5300 acre estate which is being carefully assessed to improve the interface between the public and the farmer. Already a five year tree planting programme is under way and major improvements to the rights of way network are being undertaken by Leicestershire County Council.

Ponds are being cleaned by volunteers and contractors with specialist advice from conservation agencies. Sites of deserted medieval villages are being preserved and interpreted.

But it is at the Stoughton Farm Park that most of the story is centred.

Aware that much interpretive effort has gone into explaining our rural past, Stoughton aims to raise present-day

farming issues through a five year programme.

WHERE THE COWS ARE

Centre-piece of the Farm is the milking parlour where 150 pedigree British Holstein cows are milked each day. Here a new gallery gives visitors a close-up view of the action and display panels explain the full process of milk production from Grass to Glass.

Even the smellier aspects of farming, silage and slurry, get their fair share of the story with plans for a viewing platform to give the more discerning visitor a bird's eye view of a thousand cubic metres of shhh, you know what!

Latest farm machinery, when not being used on the farm, stands alongside vintage ploughs, threshing sets and horse drawn equipment.

To amplify an underlying safety message, children are not given access to tractor cabs or other machinery. It was hoped to give hands-on experience of being a tractor driver, sitting in a cab. But how do you explain to a six-year-old that you can sit in this cab because its in a Farm Park, but you never sit in one when its in a Farm Yard?



Stoughton Farm Park - awaiting its first visitors.

(Photo: Bill Breakell)

ANIMALS OF THE PAST

A pair of Shire Horses are on hand to take visitors through the parkland, and rare breeds show why most of our milk is now produced by Black and White Friesians or Holsteins.

The living landscape is explained through external display panels which lead the visitor past 300 year old cedars, over the site of the medieval monastic grange and to a lake which has been carefully recreated on the site of the ornamental lake which was here from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.

A multi-screen audio visual production takes the public on a whistle-stop trip

through a couple of million years of landscape creation.

Local collections of historical artefacts are displayed at the Farm Park and vintage machinery is also on display.

But the emphasis throughout is on present day farming issues and a programme of guided walks takes visitors to the Grain Drying Plant and other dairy units on the estate where farm staff are able to explain and discuss farming in the late twentieth century.

PAYING ITS WAY

The Farm Park is a commercial venture and has to see a return on the substantial

capital invested in the project. To this end there are a number of revenue-generating operations on the site.

The Wheatsheaf Cafe, a garden centre, gift shop and farm shop are operated by the Farm Park. A blacksmith, potter and other craftworkers lease units on the site. Conference facilities are available for product launches, seminars and other business meetings.

Continuity and change have been bywords of the farmer. But never before has the need for an honest explanation of agriculture been greater.

Stoughton Farm Park aims to create that interface between the farmer and the public.

1989 IS BRITISH FOOD AND FARMING YEAR.

A contribution from the organisers.



HOW IS IT BEING ORGANISED?

The initial stimulus and executive effort has come from The Royal Agricultural Society of England who took the initiative in setting up a structure of Council, organising committees and specialist working parties.

Other founding organisations are The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, The Country Landowners' Association, The Dairy Trade Federation, Food from Britain, The Meat & Livestock Commission, The Milk Marketing Board and The National Farmers' Union. The Food and Drink Federation is also supporting the Year.

Chairman of the Council is HRH The Duke of Edinburgh; deputy chairman is The Rt Hon James Prior. Established to oversee direction of the Year, the Council comprises the chairmen and chief executives of over forty organisations which represent food, farming, countryside and environmental interests.

The Council is served by two main committees, covering policy and co-ordination and finance and sponsorship.

Specialist working parties deal with education and schools; museums and galleries; food and agricultural produce; farm and countryside activities; churches and publicity.

Steering committees have been established in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales with reciprocal working parties as appropriate.

To ensure that the aims of the Year are effected at all levels, county steering groups have been set up throughout the Country.

The whole UK effort will be fully co-ordinated by a small central project team based at the RASE's London office, acting as a stimulus for the Year, an "ideas

exchange", a communications centre, and liaison point for all committees, working parties and individual participants.

The aim is to strengthen public understanding and appreciation of the immense contribution the British food and farming industry makes, both to the nation's economy and to our whole way of life.

WHY CELEBRATE?

By applying the discoveries of science, and the skills of farmers and farm workers, we now produce 80% of our requirement for products that can be grown in the UK — a tremendous advance over the last 50 years.

There is also a remarkable export record to celebrate. From 1970 to 1986 exports of food and drink grew, virtually ten-fold, from £474m to £4,633m. People both at home and abroad like British Food. The UK food industry has great potential for growth to meet the demand for ever more attractive and sophisticated food products, and in particular to supply export markets that are ready to take our high quality foods.

But there is much more than today's production and export success to recognise. Our countryside, one of the most beautiful in the world, is the backcloth to our towns, the place where many people spend their leisure and relax, and the farmers' workplace. Agriculture has in many ways shaped the countryside, and the history of agriculture is in many essentials the history of the nation.

At whatever period one looks, the impact of farming on the culture of Britain has been enormous. Much of our architectural heritage, whether in the great houses or churches, is the result of agricultural prosperity. The visual and fine arts have constantly reflected the farming and rural scene. Music and literature too, have been influenced by the countryside.

Those involved in food production today

face problems — economic, social and environmental. They should not be ignored, but this must not stop us from recognising great achievements and great potential, and from seeking to bring together all those whose livelihood is drawn from the land and those who in all other ways value the countryside.

WHY 1989?

The opportunity arose from the coincidence of two important anniversaries. In 1989 the Royal Agricultural Society of England will hold its 150th Show. In the same year the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food celebrates the centenary of its formation as the Board of Agriculture.

As far back as 1983, when leaders of agriculture were discussing the idea of a "Year of British Food & Agriculture", designed to improve the general public's understanding of the industry, the occasion of these two great birthdays gave the concept a special relevance and, not least, sufficient lead time to plan an effective campaign.

Amongst other important anniversaries, 1989 marks fifty years since the outbreak of the Second World War when the Land Army played such a vital role in feeding the nation; and Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies will have been manufacturing farm machinery for no less than two hundred years - since 1789.

WHO WILL CELEBRATE?

Everyone in food and agriculture can be involved. Already hundreds of organisations and thousands of people are committed to taking part; just a few of them are mentioned in this article.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the celebration will be the opportunity for organisations not normally very close to food and farming to participate. Agriculture has been the source of much of

our wealth, and much of our early cultural activity is related to the land and its produce. Thus museums, art galleries, libraries and others will join with us in this great national celebration.

THEMES TO BE EXPLORED

Every organisation, company and individual connected with food, farming and the countryside has something to contribute to, and gain from, the Year.

It is intended that the Celebration will reflect food and farming in the widest possible context, so 1989 presents the industry with a unique opportunity to celebrate, and strengthen public understanding and appreciation of the immense contribution their industry makes, both to the nation's economy and to our whole way of life - from food and drink to the landscape, architecture and the arts.

As well as providing an excellent platform to develop an educational programme about the industry, it also gives us a wonderful opportunity to look at, debate and, hopefully, make real progress towards resolving some of the prevalent issues of modern life, looking forward to a brighter future for our industry in the 1990s.

Within and extending this broad objective we aim:

- to show, both by events in our towns and cities, and by organising visits to the countryside, how agriculture and food production have developed historically, and the important contribution of education and research to this development
- to foster a continuing improvement in good, practical relationships between farm production, care of the environment and widespread use of the countryside for leisure activities
- to promote the regional variety and quality of our food and drink products and the achievements of the food manufacturing, distribution and retailing sectors
- to record the influence of Britain on the world's agriculture through the export of expertise and technology
- to exhibit the art and architecture related to agriculture, food and drink
- to honour the people whose work and innovation have created the agricultural revolution
- to look forward constructively to a bright future for the British food and farming industry and to ensure that the beneficial impact of our industry celebration in 1989 remains with the British public in the years beyond that.

SO WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

At national level there will be a core of events designed to attract the attention of the media and members of the general public. Already many major national

activities are being planned by the various committees and working parties. Just some of the plans include:

- a three day agricultural show in Hyde Park and country fairs in other civic centres
- high street promotions of British food
- major television and editorial coverage, prestigious publishing projects and a commemorative set of stamps
- a national service of Harvest Thanksgiving in St Paul's and other services in cathedrals nationally
- a major travelling exhibition to tour eight premier provincial museums during 1989
- new educational resource material for schools and a nationwide initiative to provide increased opportunities for schoolchildren in Britain to visit a farm or food factory in 1989.

These and other activities will provide an 'umbrella' for the Year, creating a suitable environment for others to work within. The success of the Year will largely depend on 'grass roots' support and everybody concerned with food production and the countryside participating. There is plenty of scope for individual organisations, companies, institutions, clubs, societies



From *Learning from the Land*

and individuals to mount a wide range of activities reflecting their own particular interest or local variation of the food and farming message. Just some of the specific plans include:

- Publication of a new cookery book "The Dairy Book of British Food" by the dairy industry.
- In association with The Rare Breeds Survival Trust, a major travelling exhibition will be mounted entitled "Our Living Heritage — 5000 Years of British Farm Animals". Described as a

"living museum" the exhibition will tour the major agricultural shows during 1989

- The Science Museum plans to open a new, completely refurbished, farming and food processing gallery and many other museums and galleries up and down the country will be putting on special exhibits
- The National History Museum hopes to mount an exhibition concentrating on the domestication of farm livestock entitled "Man-made Animals"
- The Victoria & Albert Museum will put on a Summer exhibition on the fine and decorative arts relating to food and drink
- The British Wool Marketing Board will support 1989 with fashion presentations showing the use and development of British grown wool.



From *Learning from the Land*.

Many more events, activities and on-going projects can and will be set up — at national, regional and local level — designed to reach and involve everybody.

Events might reflect the progress of the industry historically, the current status, development of specific sectors, and hopefully look towards the future.

Common to all events and activities will be the theme of entertainment. The object will be to give people the opportunity to have fun and enjoy themselves while learning at first hand about the countryside in which they take pride, about the achievements of agriculture in the last 150 years and about the excellence of British food and drink.

AT WHAT COST?

A central core fund of almost £500,000 has been donated by the founding organisations and a number of commercial companies who see the aims of the Year as relevant to their own interests.

This money will ensure success in terms of pump-priming for the major national events needing individual sponsorship, communication throughout the UK and generally keeping the ball rolling during 1989.

There will be many individual sponsorship opportunities available to companies at regional and local level too. And also opportunities for help in kind.

Work is going ahead to see by what means further money might be raised to fund a major advertising and public relations campaign to ensure that the message reaches the widest possible audience and creates a massive impact.

FOOD & FARMING FACTS AND FIGURES

A new databook on food and farming facts and figures has been published for British Food & Farming Year. As the Year marks the 150th Anniversary of the Royal Agricultural Society of England and the Centenary of the founding of the Ministry of Agriculture in 1889, it was decided to take a fresh look at the record of British agriculture's achievements over the past hundred years or so.

"A Hundred Years of British Food & Farming — A Statistical Survey" is not the first of its kind, but it is first to show historical trends since the Ministry of Agriculture published "A Century of Agricultural Statistics" in 1968. No-one connected with agriculture needs to be reminded that much has happened in the last twenty years. Far-reaching changes have occurred in technology, policy and social structure and the pace of change seems to be accelerating. The new publication sets out to bring the historical trends up-to-date and widen the scope of the original publication.

The book has been compiled by Hilary Marks (former Chief Economist of the Meat & Livestock Commission) and edited by Professor Denis Britton, Emeritus Professor of Agricultural Economics in the University of London. It was published by Taylor & Francis in November 1988.

The book is published in an easy-to-follow "popular" style with graphic illustrations and detailed appendices for closer examination. It is hoped that the record of the major long-term developments which have occurred in British food and farming will be of interest not only to those concerned with the formulation and evaluation of agricultural policy but also to farmers, the food industry, associated advisers and consultants in marketing, advertising and public relations, students and members of the general public.

THE FESTIVAL OF FOOD & FARMING

Plans are well in hand for a spectacular three day Festival of Food & Farming to be held in the heart of London in 1989. The Festival will undoubtedly be the flagship event of British Food & Farming Year.

The Festival will take place on a 100 acre site in London's Hyde Park from 5th-7th May 1989. Special permission for this one-off event has been granted by the Royal Parks Department and a detailed feasibility study has already been carried out.

The Festival will be the greatest event to be staged in the Park since The Great Exhibition of 1851.

Livestock parades, conservation exhibits, food sampling, machinery displays and a host of other attractions will help to fulfill British Food & Farming Year's main objective, to strengthen public understanding and appreciation of our most essential industry and give the



From *Learning from the Land*.

visitors some fun in the process. A special day will be arranged for visits by parties of inner London school children.

The Festival will provide a unique public relations opportunity for all sectors of the industry. It is a chance to demonstrate products and technology, to meet the public and to generate a greater awareness and understanding in all age groups. Over the three days an estimated half a million people will attend the event.

In November over two thousand brochures about the Festival were sent to industry contacts. To date the response has been

exciting, with companies and trade associations seizing the valuable opportunity to put their part of the story.

Historical and educational exhibitions are planned as well as demonstrations, competitions and attracting ring events. If you wish to participate, but have not yet received details, please contact: Festival of Food & Farming, Freepost, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3BR.

A varied programme of events is being developed for the three large showings, giving a lively combination of activities including livestock and machinery parades, the famous JCB "Dancing Diggers", gundog displays and thatching.

The Festival looks set to be the most exciting and important food and agricultural event ever held in Britain. Show Director, Andy Ayres, says, "We want a broad range of agricultural and food related companies as exhibitors, but they must be British or based in Britain. The Festival will be a showcase for the world of the best of British food and farming".

Other projects in progress include transport arrangements. The organisers are working hard with the local transport authorities to ensure that the one million visitors expected have a safe and relaxed journey to and from Hyde Park.

"We have all the infrastructure firmly in place," comments Andy Ayres. "May 4 is trade, press and preview day, with a strong emphasis on business and export opportunities. May 5 is children's day and all London schoolchildren are being invited to the Festival with their teachers. It is an excellent opportunity for them to learn about agriculture, food and conservation. May 6 and 7 are public days and everybody is welcome to come and enjoy themselves."

TEACHERS RESOURCE PACK

J H Dewhurst Ltd has sponsored production of the British Food & Farming Year Teacher's Resource Pack.

The first stage of this major initiative was the mailing of an introductory package to 40,000 schools, local education authority officers and teachers' centres in April 1988. This package giving full details of the Teacher's Resource Pack, contained an order form enabling schools to obtain their copy in good time for the 1988/89 school year.

The pack is designed for use by teachers in the classroom and is adaptable for pupils of many ages. It consists of information sheets on twenty-five different topics related to agriculture and food production, each one illustrated with clear and lively line-drawings. The subjects cover all aspects of arable and livestock farming and

range from Beef, Dairying, Poultry and Cereals to Organic Farming, Conservation and Diet.

Colin Cullimore, Managing Director of J H Dewhurst Ltd, has stressed that this is part of an on-going commitment by Dewhurst and that the Resource Packs will be available beyond 1989.

Material for the Pack was produced by young science and graphic arts graduates under an MSC Community Programme, sponsored jointly by the Royal Agricultural Society of England and Staffordshire County Council, and supervised by the Environmental Section of the Staffordshire Education Authority.

An advisory committee drawn from both agriculture and education has been responsible for checking factual accuracy and relevance to the classroom.

The Teacher's Resource Pack is an integral part of the educational campaign to compliment British Food & Farming Year in 1989, and which includes a nationwide initiative to enable more schoolchildren to visit a farm or food factory during the Year.

Dewhurst's support means that the Pack can be bought by schools at a subsidised cost. In addition to the information sheets, the Pack contains an Index, Glossary and Bibliography together with a colourful poster for display in the classroom.

The pack is available for £4.50 including postage and packing. Cheques should be made payable to Stanton & Sons and sent to them at 44 St. Giles Street, Northampton NN1 1JW.

LEARNING FROM THE LAND

The handbook for teachers and farmers on how to organise safe and educational school-farm visits is now available on request. Two hundred thousand copies were produced thanks to the sponsorship from the Crown Estate and Countryside Commission and already homes have been found for well over half.

One letter received from a Schools Inspector describes the handbook as a "useful guide to thinking about educational use of the first hand experience that farm and estate visits offer. The examples of projects described at the end of the booklet are particularly helpful in reference to continued study on return to school. The value and importance of visits being part of a sequence of learning comes across in these examples".

Copies of "Learning from the Land" are free to teachers and farmers: a thousand copies have been delivered to each of the NFU county officers for local dissemination, alternatively send an A5 stamped addressed envelope for 20 pence to: Learning from the Land, British Food & Farming 1989, 35 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8QN.

FARM SAFETY CODE

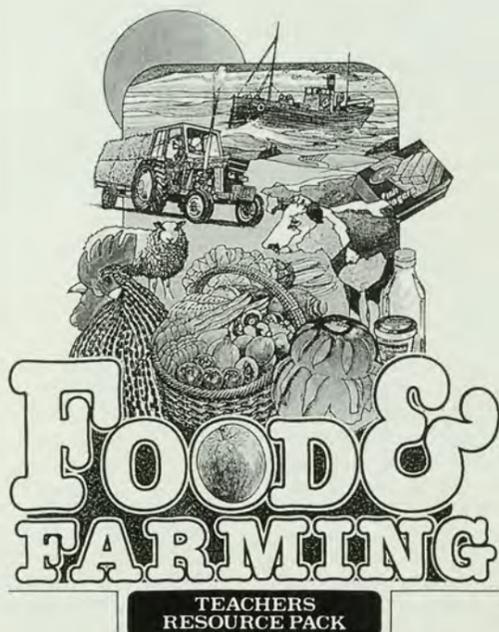
A number of specially produced publications will help to keep agriculture safe during 1989. With major programmes of school farm visits planned for the Year, great attention is being paid to ensuring that they are safely conducted. The Health & Safety Executive is producing special, pocket-size, Farm Safety Check Lists for teachers and farmers. The check list will bear out the advice given in the school farm visits handbook, "Learning from the Land", and will be distributed throughout England, Scotland and Wales later this year.

HSE's Teachers' Resource Pack, "A Day on the Farm", is being revised at present but will be ready for use during 1989. It is designed for 6-11 year olds and covers

general farm activities as well as safety matters. Copies will be available from the HSE.

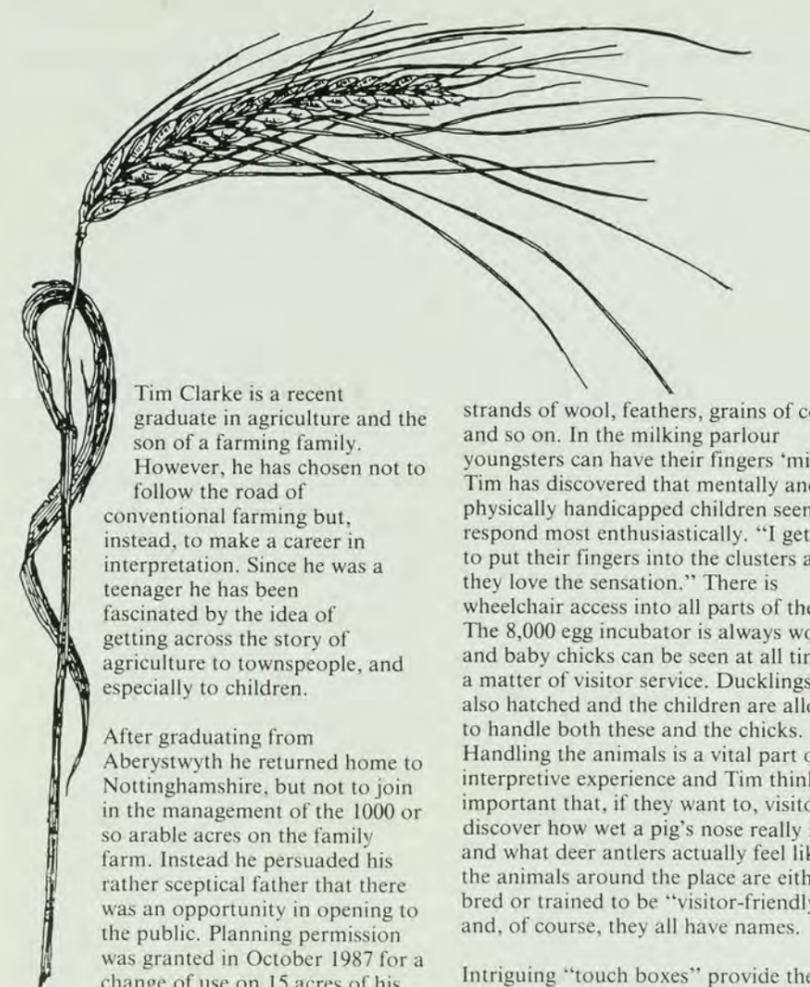
An invaluable document for farmers taking part in the school visits programme is the HSE's approved code of practice and guidance notes "Preventing Accidents to Children in Agriculture". This booklet deals as much with safety for children actually living and working on farms as with the occasional visitors. Legislation relating to children and farm vehicles is detailed. All farmers who have children around the farmyard or are considering school farm visits should read it. Priced £2.75, it is available from Government Bookshops, on request, any good bookstore, or by writing to HMSO Books, Freeport, London SW8 5DR (ISBN ref. 0 11 883997 7).

**GET
THE
FACTS
ABOUT**



DEWHURST

THE WHITE POST MODERN FARM CENTRE AND TIM CLARK.



Tim Clarke is a recent graduate in agriculture and the son of a farming family. However, he has chosen not to follow the road of conventional farming but, instead, to make a career in interpretation. Since he was a teenager he has been fascinated by the idea of getting across the story of agriculture to townspeople, and especially to children.

After graduating from Aberystwyth he returned home to Nottinghamshire, but not to join in the management of the 1000 or so arable acres on the family farm. Instead he persuaded his rather sceptical father that there was an opportunity in opening to the public. Planning permission was granted in October 1987 for a change of use on 15 acres of his father's land, with pig farm buildings at the heart of it. Six months of hard conversion work later the 'White Post Modern Farm Centre' opened to its first visitors. Why 'modern'? Well, there is no attempt to interpret bygone farming practices, and Tim Clark is striving to incorporate an example of every type of modern farming and examples of every breed of animal farmed in Britain today. The expected farm stock are all present - calves, goats, pigs and sheep - but there are also more exotic beasts such as llamas, angora rabbits and red deer which bring home, in a subtle and attractive way, messages about diversification, alternative crops and import-saving. Ducks, geese and hens complete the menagerie.

It is virtually a truism to say that interpretation can be, nay should be fun. How does the White Post Centre go about putting this into practice? Firstly, there is a great deal of first-hand interpretation from Tim and his seven part-time guides. They take visitors in small groups and hold a continuous dialogue. Secondly, there is a lot of "hands-on" experience to make the visit memorable. Instead of questionnaires the kids are each given a bag in which to collect things as they make their tour -

on ball bearing - like rapeseed. Less cerebral, more energetic, farm-made amusements allow the more active types to burn off spare energy.

Away from the livestock are plots given over to modern crops - cereals, potatoes and oilseed rape for example, together with small panels to explain about their cultivation and use in such familiar end-products as biscuits, beer, cooking oil and potato crisps. Commercial mushroom growing also has a place at the Farm Centre. Captions explain how growing in bags enable disease to be contained; that a mushroom will double its size every 24 hours; and that growers produce an amazing £233 million worth of mushrooms each year. Even the diesel tank - which many people would quietly ignore - has a caption to explain what it is and its importance on a modern farm.

Inevitably, to help generate revenue for the enterprise, there is a tearoom and a shop - converted from a former piggery. This enterprise is run by Melanie Clark, Tim's sister. Most items are farm or countryside related and priced within the budget of children, who typically have 50p - £1 as pocket money for their visit. Children who come in school parties then bring their parents on another occasion, are a valuable part of the Centre's growing trade.

To enhance visitor levels in 1989, the following special events are planned:-

15th & 16th April Countryside Craft & Wildlife Weekend

30th April & 1st May Beef, Milk, Lamb and Wool Weekend

23rd & 24th September Countryside Craft & Wildlife Weekend

14th & 15th October Pork, Chicken & Egg Weekend

The White Post Modern Farm Centre is at Farnsfield near Newark.



TELLING THE TOWNSMAN ABOUT THE COUNTRY

M. D. St. G. Kirke, A.B.I.A.C.

Writer and educationist

When I was running work camps for the National Trust, I was amazed that countryside interpretation was considered necessary. Now, after a career in teaching rural science and environmental studies, and latterly in heritage/tourism publishing, I am aware of the need to explain the workings of the countryside to townsmen.

The urban majority have some woeful misconceptions about the country life and country people. Although fewer people than ever before are involved in commercial husbandry, the number with comparatively recent rural roots is enormous.

These recent country people and their descendants have a latent interest in country life. That may be evident in the pursuit of country sports or in an interest in rural events and practices.

The increased wealth and leisure of urban people results in continuing pressure on the countryside - especially the urban fringes, or well-advertised tourist attractions and their environs. Tourism and the study of local and family histories share with the crafts an explosion of interest in the country and its way of life. Beneath the surface of such interests lies a partly sentimental and partly heartfelt hungering for a return to the solid and reassuring values of a simpler and safer society.

TRENDS IN FARMING

The evergreen radio and T.V. series, "The Archers" and "Emmerdale Farm" do a great deal to keep the urban public abreast of trends in farming methods and village life. The continuing success of such programmes must lie in the appeal to the countryman lurking in the hearts of many Britons.

It is hardly surprising that the immense audiences of these programmes have a soft spot for the tradition of mixed farms run by yeomen farmers or tenants of ancient estates. Is it purely by chance that the managers of large agri-businesses are cast in an unsympathetic vein? Many of the public are ready to believe that such characters, foreign and home-bred, are daily increasing their ruthless hold upon an unprotected countryside. The public can easily be seduced by the green politics of conservation without realising that good husbandmen have always been conservationists, in order to keep their land in good heart.

The public at large, and the family party in particular, visit farms, country parks and

stately homes in search of a different form of entertainment from that of the sea-side and funfair. They often visit a place because their children went there with a school party. Many have a genuine desire to know more of what they see and how it works.

In this field of description and interpretation, the public are often totally bemused by the wrong sort of information. Interpretation is a skill with which some are born and others acquire through training and experience.

HOW TO DO IT

As anyone who has been trained for any job of work knows "Doing is the best form of learning", but by no means the only successful method. Farmhouse holidays and B & B are ways of giving townspeople direct contact with farming life, especially when the hosts have time to mix socially with their guests.

The Pick Your Own movement has given thousands of townspeople the pleasure of picking fruit in the summer and autumn, although few would relish the thought of picking frosted sprouts in winter. Many PYO establishments encourage their visitors to stay by the provision of shops and catering, picnic and play facilities. When farmers and growers run such a tourist attraction they have a captive audience whose good will can be tapped. Some have a long and successful record of farm walks or wagon rides, during which the working of their enterprises can be explained. Others lay out farm and/or nature trails for people to walk round - with or without the assistance of interpretive material.

BY WHOM IS IT DONE?

Many farming families and estate workers can explain their work with as much gusto as a popular actor or public speaker. Some would be at a loss in the preparation of films or static displays, while others simply could not find the time to write, and repeatedly re-write, "copy" for printed material even if they left the design and layout to a printer or an advertising agency.

Such interpretive material is often written by people with quite splendid academic qualifications or by experts in a particular field. All too frequently, the end-product shows a total inability to communicate with the inhabitants of either Acacia Avenue or Scargill Street. (Yes, there is one!)

Ideally, interpretation needs to be undertaken by those with both practical experience in farming, or an allied occupation, combined with the ability to put this knowledge in to simple, informative and, above all, readable language for the urban layman.

The Ministry of Agriculture and the Countryside Commission may award financial grants towards publications and exhibitions. Children's material is best prepared by those with the qualities and expertise acquired by daily contact with children. Many academics and experts in other fields wisely admit their inability to communicate at the level of either the eager six-year-old or the "switched off" teenager.

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RARE BREEDS - A LIVING HERITAGE

JOE HENSON

Vice President - Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

In 1989, designated as "British Food and Farming Year", it is hoped that many people, especially the young, will feel encouraged to visit open farms to appreciate the countryside as an area of quality food production and ecological conservation.

The Rare Breeds Survival Trust is mounting a major demonstration at Hyde Park in May and at the four National Agricultural Shows to tell us the story of the evolution of British Farm Livestock from early domestication to the present day. Farm Parks, collections of rare breeds open to the public which have joined the Trust's "Approval Scheme", will be laying on special attractions within the theme of Food & Farming Year.

The Cotswold Farm Park at Guiting Power near Bourton-on-the-Water in Gloucestershire is launching a new Sheep Demonstration Building with the help of sponsorship from National Westminster Bank. The first demonstration to re-open the Park on Good Friday will be "Lambing". The Building will be divided into pens with about fifty pregnant ewes lambing in front of the public. Small individual pens will be constructed for the new born lambs with their mothers

together with larger nursery pens holding about ten ewes each with their one and two day old lambs. As the ewes lamb they will be replenished from the main flock of 650 ewes composed of both commercial and rare breeds. Three days after lambing the ewes and lambs will be turned out to grass.

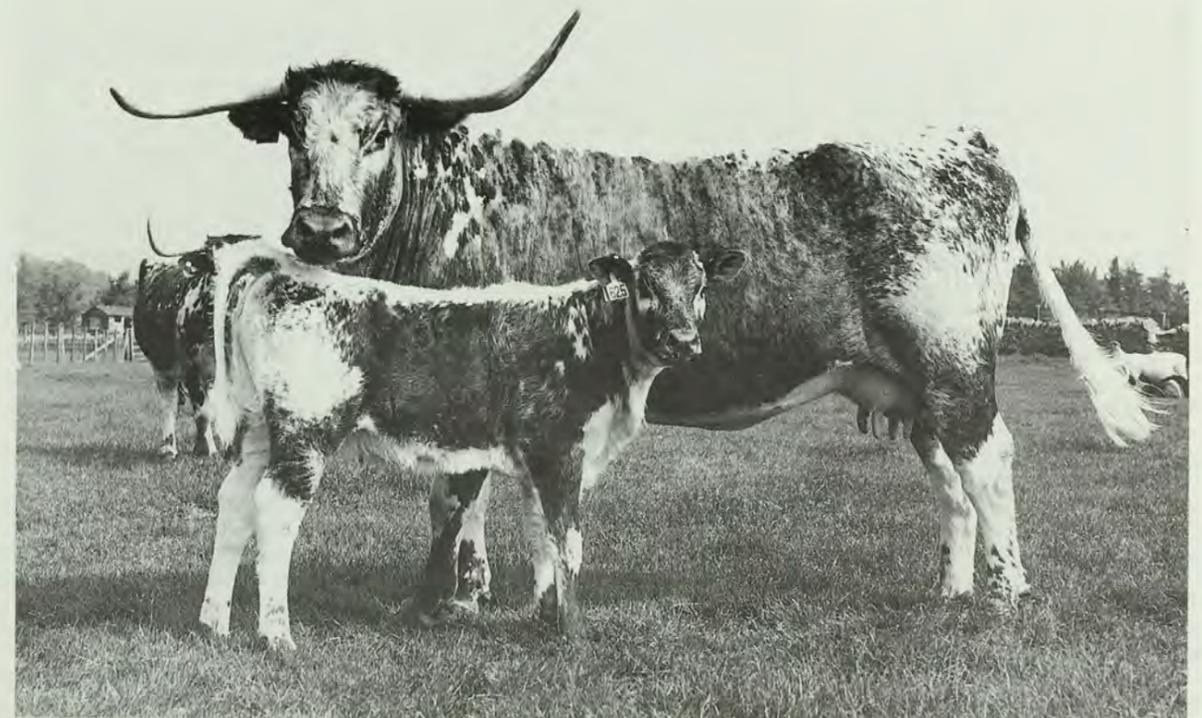
The exhibition will be in the charge of an experienced shepherd or shepherdess who will be fitted with a radio microphone. They will be able to tend the needs of the flock and lamb ewes while talking the visitors through what they are doing. They will also be constantly on site to answer questions and it is hoped that people will enjoy what for many will be a new and exciting experience. This will continue until the end of April. Later in the season other shepherding tasks such as shearing will also be demonstrated in the building where sheep, shepherds and visitors will be warm and dry regardless of the weather.

The concept of preserving rare breeds of farm livestock as a legacy from the past to create a gene bank for the future has been only recently generally accepted. The Establishment, who at one time considered rare breeds to be a drain on national resources, hampering the essential increase in food production, has now given the

movement full support. Faced with the problem of European surpluses the accent is now on reducing production and conserving our heritage and our environment. Rare Breeds kept to beautify the countryside while maintaining a grazing ecology now have a vital role to play. Being self reliant, hardy and often more disease resistant, they can survive in low cost systems on rough grazing or waste arable by products without help of antibiotics and steroids. The maxim of maximum production regardless of cost has been replaced by one of reducing surpluses and low cost systems. This puts rare breeds which evolved in a peasant economy back in their rightful place.

Those wishing to support the work of Rare Breeds survival can write to the Head Office of the R.B.S.T., c/o National Agriculture Centre, Stoneleigh, Kenilworth, Warwicks.

The Cotswold Farm Park which contains one of the most comprehensive and attractive collections of rare breeds in the country is open from Good Friday to 1st October every day from 10.30 - 5.30. Their address is Guiting Power, Cheltenham, Glos. Telephone 04515 307.



Longhorn Cow and Calf.



Customer satisfaction at Cotswold Farm Park.

(Photo - Gloucester Citizen)

FOOD AND FARMING IN SUFFOLK

LESLEY COLSELL

Assistant Director/Curator - Museum of East Anglian Life.

1989 is British Food and Farming Year and museums all over the country are making an effort to participate in the celebrations. The agricultural museums will obviously be taking a lead in this. The Museum of East Anglia Life is no different and we have a very comprehensive list of demonstrations and exhibitions planned which tie in with this theme.

The Museum of East Anglia Life at Stowmarket in Suffolk is a 70-acre site, of which only 30 acres are open to the public at present. Our displays cover all aspects of life including domestic room settings, craft workshops, a steam gallery, industry and agriculture. We own a working Suffolk Punch horse and regularly operate three steam traction engines. Also on site are reconstructed buildings and these include a working smithy, windpump and a water mill.

Situated in the heart of Suffolk, agriculture is a subject of prime importance to the area and we try to interpret the changes and development by having as many demonstrations as possible. In the centre of the site is a five-and-a-half acre field, on which we grow a long straw variety of wheat. This is harvested with a binder and stooked in the traditional way. Later in the year we thresh the wheat out with steam power, using the Museum's 1912 Burrell traction engine and our 1946 Ransomes threshing drum. Threshing demonstrations take place over a couple of weekends and on special days in the week for schools. The long straw is then sold to thatchers.

The Museum organises several special events for schools throughout the year on particular themes. We find the "From Grain to Bread" days very popular, because children stand on a stubble field and can see the sheaves of corn being fed through the threshing drum. The grain which comes out is taken to our watermill, where they can see it being ground into flour. From here it goes into the mill house kitchen to be made into bread and scones and baked on a coal-fired range. One of the most difficult parts as far as the traction engine and the range are concerned is to explain to children who live in centrally heated homes what coal is. All the time they are watching, and in some cases taking part in these demonstrations a comparison is being drawn with modern technology, i.e. the electric or gas cooker, the combine harvester and the change of lifestyle, which actually means that many people do not bake bread in their homes any more. We feel that these days are of immense value in helping children to understand their past.

This year we have organised a competition for schools which is related to Food and Farming Year. The under-11's have to complete a piece of work, either a painting, poem or model of a farm animal or a piece of agricultural machinery. This, hopefully, will encourage schools to take advantage of visiting the many farm open days which have been organised throughout this year. The over-11's project is to find out how the food for our tables is grown and, after it has been harvested, how it arrives in the

shops or markets. They can either do this by writing a poem or short story, concentrating on one particular aspect, or they can design or make a model of a machine suitable for harvesting or processing a particular produce, i.e. peas, sugarbeet or wheat, etc.. Students will need to familiarise themselves with 19th and 20th Century machinery, as the machine they design will be suitable for small areas of land only. This will involve some in-depth study.

Another of our major events for Food and Farming Year is to celebrate 200 years of Ransomes, Sims and Jefferies. Based at Ipswich, Suffolk, their agricultural machinery is renowned worldwide. Not only will we be having an exhibition about the history and achievements of the Company, but we will be holding a Ransomes weekend on 27th and 28th August 1989. We will be gathering together many examples of Ransomes machinery, from hay rakes to lawnmowers, to steam engines and, where possible, we will be demonstrating the machinery at work. It should prove to be an interesting and exciting weekend. Hopefully, with the help of the Company, we should be able to bring the story of this very important firm right up to date.

Food and Farming Year has given Museums a wonderful opportunity to interpret our agricultural heritage. This, we hope, will lead to a greater understanding of our environment.

THE SHAKESPEARE COUNTRYSIDE

JOHN HOLLIDAY

Urban and Landscape Management Consultant.

The heritage interpretation movement has opened up riches which before lay unseen all around us. Above all it has made clear the diversity of sources which created the heritage, including those of literature and drama. The movement counters the tendency in official planning, and with the public at large, to view the environment, and our landscapes in particular, as pictures divorced from content. The control of new development within these pictures, while valuable, often works in ignorance of the great rural heritage on which modern society is built.

The impetus for this study came from the work of a group within the Stratford-upon-Avon Society which was considering strategies for the area. In 1923 Patrick and ascelles Abercrombie, in their plan for Stratford, had written that the area "is still to a large degree visibly Shakespeare's town with Shakespeare's unmistakable country about it." The town has been well researched and planned; the countryside was relatively unstudied. This seemed to be a dangerous omission in view of the construction of the M40 which will join London to Birmingham and runs between Stratford and Warwick. This route will accelerate the already fast growing pressures for development. In addition the decline in agricultural support invites rapid change to new land uses.

Three questions arise from this situation: What is the heritage? How can it be interpreted? and What steps should be taken next?

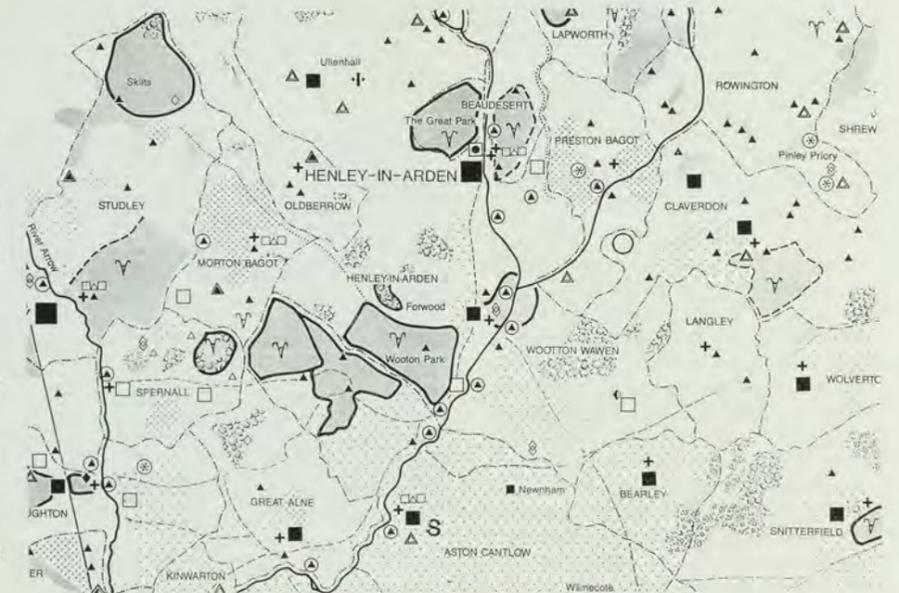
The Heritage

Shakespeare's works are scattered with references to nature and countryside life. The Forest of Arden in particular features in *As You Like It*. Given documented knowledge about his family, and the normal journey times of the day, it is possible that Shakespeare was very familiar with an area of about ten miles around Stratford, which includes Warwick.

Around the world, Stratford is one of the best known and most visited places in England. The world heritage stems from Shakespeare, and around the Royal Shakespeare Theatre his places can be visited in uniquely valuable and relatively unspoilt town and country. From an English perspective, the south Warwickshire countryside is in many ways the quintessence of what the traditions of rural England conjure to mind: thatched cottages, attractive villages, leafy lanes, meandering streams and oak woodlands.

This double heritage of global and local interest gave rise to the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and to a great deal of attention and effort focussed on the town. Only recently has the Trust established a countryside museum but knowledge about the countryside has been sparse and action very limited. Clearly at the very least it was necessary to find out more about the area.

From the general survey it is easy to discern the major characteristics of the region which had been noted by John Leland around 1540. To the north of the Avon lies the wooded area of Arden; to the south lies the Feldon, long a rich corn raising area. In Arden are scattered farmsteads, small irregular fields, much pasture, some woodland (the 'forest' had largely gone by Shakespeare's day) and



Historic landscape map based on research by Della Hooke.

Interpreting the Heritage.

The study has concentrated on the historic landscape of Shakespeare's time. It covers the area that he would have known and much of the report describes the historic survey, which is also shown on a 1:50,000 scale map, a section of which is shown here. The survey covers settlement (including farm houses), deserted villages, woodland, areas of similar field type, commons, roads and tracks, and a large number of deerparks. It shows that much that was there in the seventeenth century is still with us - 'Shakespeare's unmistakable country.'

The overall survey provides the first step towards interpretation. To provide further insights three parishes were studied in greater detail. The map also shows the house of Mary Arden, Shakespeare's mother, which is now The Countryside Museum of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

parkland. Hamlets, with 'end' or 'green' in their names, are left over from the time of commoners cottages. In the Feldon are the large open fields which were farmed by the communal agreement of those who lived in the central nucleated villages.

Today the characteristics of both areas are still clear, although the commons have all gone, and in the Feldon the landscape is now of the smaller, but still large, rectangular fields of the parliamentary enclosures, overlooked from the eastern scarp of the Cotswolds.

These contrasting landscapes, with the Avon Valley between, have affected the later development of the area. The proximity of Arden to Birmingham and Coventry, combined with a more undulating and wooded landscape and the traditions of scattered settlement, brought a good deal of commuter and retirement house building, not always in villages. In the Feldon, greater distance from the cities and a flat open landscape have discouraged similar development. It is Arden which is more appealingly

associated with the traditions, and Arden which contained the houses of most of Shakespeare's family.

The detailed parish surveys show the extent of interest which lies for the most part unknown. Ridge and furrow, hedgerows which may contain old woodland plant species, tracks which were once main highways - the London Road is shown on the map near Billesley - and the house platforms and crofts of deserted villages. It is not difficult in these areas to evoke the feeling of England in its transition from a medieval to a modern landscape.

Compared with historic towns, rural history has been relatively neglected. This is partly because town and country planning practice has had little to do with the functioning of the countryside, its role being mainly protective. But it also has to do with the way in which much landscape evaluation is detached from its social and economic context, and from its history. This leads to a very superficial view of the landscape, and often near ignorance of historic man-made features. Interpretation has been shallow or non-existent.

Growing concern about the countryside is likely to change this situation and one of the tasks ahead is to research the countryside more fully, and then interpret, evaluate and assess priorities for protection, conservation and restoration. The evaluation should not only synthesize past influences, but relate past to present values and developments. For example, a second 1:50,000 map in the report defines areas of concentrated historic, biological and landscape interest, with a view to turning the attention from such purely protective policies as green belts to a recognition of the intrinsic worth of innumerable areas over the whole landscape.

Next Steps

In pursuing these tasks there is much to learn from the experience of historic towns, not least Stratford itself, which has been receiving tourists since the eighteenth century. The visiting population to sites such as the Birthplace, and the attendant pressures of feet and wheels is a danger in itself. Avebury is a current reminder of the threat posed by landowners who aim to exploit without due regard to the importance of solitude as a factor to be considered.

The avoidance of these dangers depends upon local authorities and central government preparing strategies in anticipation of growing demands. It is essential that the countryside strategies now being advocated by the Countryside Commission should be prepared on the basis of, amongst other things, the rural heritage; and that evaluations and management plans should follow.

framework for ensuring effective development and conservation. Planning control over agricultural and forestry development is largely absent, with the result that many valuable sites are destroyed; compensation provisions are often impossible to meet and grants are not effectively targeted or integrated with other funds. All this awaits professional and political action.

In the meantime the ground work can continue. In the case of this particular project, the evidence brought to light is already being used at planning inquiries, and is feeding in to local authority planning reviews. Awareness is growing, and greater acknowledgement of what we need to conserve is being made. There is no reason why conservation and restoration work should not be undertaken



Remains of house platforms in the shrunken village of Crimscote.



The southern fringe of the Forest of Arden.

now, linked to local educational and other group interests. In this case, there is already a trust (The Birthplace Trust) with a stake in the heritage at The Mary Arden Countryside Museum, and there are opportunities for farmers and landowners to consider changes in anticipation of new activity in the countryside

Time is short. We are at the beginning of a phase of countryside change between old and new eras; a change which may be as dramatic as the Parliamentary enclosure planning, or as dangerous as early uncontrolled urban industrial development. The whole country is a patchwork of environmentally sensitive areas. It is time that we stitched them together and devised some policies for their repair and maintenance.

JOHN MUIR - PROPHET OF THE WILDERNESS

FRANK HOWIE CONCLUDES HIS TWO-PART ARTICLE.

Frank Howie Associates, Environmental & Interpretive Services.

The first article in this 2-part series reviewed the influence which John Muir had on the conservation movement during his life. He died in 1914; what would he make of the American National Park System he helped to create and its "cousins" throughout the world, with the exception of his native Scotland, where there are no National Parks?

I met Len McKenzie, Head of Interpretation in Yosemite National Park. He takes a cautious view. Muir would certainly welcome the protection provided in principle by Federally awarded National Park status. He would admire the quality of the interpretive and educational services given by the ranger service to visitors. But undoubtedly he would despair at the inadequate control of cars in his beloved Valley and fear for the day when the Park's very success generates a "pressure of people" that it cannot withstand.

The "good" and the bad aspects of interpretation, recreation and conservation at Yosemite backed up my own views of the situation back home. Conservation and Tourism CAN be partners to their mutual benefit. Tourism can, where necessary, provide the hard evidence that such apparently intangible assets as landscape quality and ecological diversity have money values in terms of the hard cash spent by tourists in coming to enjoy these qualities. But it is the responsibility of the Park Service as the custodians of the nation's - and the World's - irreplaceable natural heritage to set limits on what is ecologically and visually acceptable development.

MUIR AND SCOTLAND

It is not just America that can lay claim to John Muir. Throughout his life he held his Scottish roots dear to his heart. And importantly, his ideas and ideals have just as much currency in Scotland, elsewhere in Britain and throughout the world.

The town of Dunbar, through the work of East Lothian District Council, has already commemorated its native son in the John Muir Country Park, an 8 mile stretch of coastline walked by John Muir as a boy; and in the restoration of his birthplace in the town's High Street.

The 150th Anniversary of his birth in 1988 saw the launch of the John Muir Trust, a charity set up to take on the guardianship of areas of the finest wild land in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

But why are there no National Parks in Scotland, the birthplace of the founding father of the National Park movement? The arguments have waxed and waned for many years.

The demand for conservation and for public access to the countryside has raged in Scotland for many years, going back as far as James Bryce's abortive "Access to the Mountains" Bill of 1884. The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act promised preservation and enhancement of natural beauty but, despite the American experience, declined to place responsibility for the conservation of areas of national importance in national hands, favouring the local planning authorities.



Interpretation on Wheels, Yosemite N.P.

Frank Howie

England and Wales got National Parks. Instead, Scotland got "National Park Designation Areas". In 1974, the Countryside Commission for Scotland published a document, "A Park System for Scotland". It describing a co-ordinated system of parks ranging from intensively used Urban Parks through to "Special Parks". Many would argue that the latter stop short of grasping the nettle of National Parks status with representation of the national interest in the areas' conservation and recreational (and other) development. To this day no "Special Parks" have been designated. In 1978 40 areas of national scenic significance were identified as "National Scenic Areas".

Today Scotland has a plethora of Designated Areas; National Scenic Areas including National Nature Reserves and National Forest Parks. Where would National Parks fit in?

Especially in a small country it has to be recognised that no single type of park is suitable for all areas. Areas such as Loch Lomond are already visited by hundreds of thousands of visitors every summer. There is a real danger that if the numbers were allowed to grow uncontrolled, undirected, they would totally destroy the experience. Yet it is not an area you would want to stop people coming to. In the case of very wild, remote areas like Knoydart, where the John Muir Trust have purchased their first property, present use is largely confined to a relatively small number of walking and climbing enthusiasts. Protective measures are appropriate there. In other words a number of different types of National Parks are required - since these areas are of national significance - but each tailored to the requirements of the area. The idea that the wilderness should be "left alone" and that there is no need to do anything about it is naive. Some kind of control and direction is necessary, if only to protect them.

With new technology and a trend to shorter working weeks, people are increasingly looking to the countryside for recreation and escape from the pressure of urban life. Something like 20 million walks in the countryside of between 2 and 10 miles are taken during the summer months alone. The pressures in places like the Cairngorms are obvious because of the ski developments. But other areas show clear signs of deterioration as in eroded paths to summits, necessitating repair and maintenance. The pressures are already with us and will increase considerably.

If we have to take "sides", then I am in the

pro-parks side. The pressures of increasing recreational use, changing agricultural and forestry priorities are increasing.

Some forms of overall, collaborative system of planning and management covering the whole of an area would at least help to provide a balance between the different pressures for conservation and/or development and between the local and the national interest. There is no legislation to achieve that at the present time.

I feel John Muir would, after due deliberation over today's circumstances, come to the same point of view. Undoubtedly he would worry that his total commitment to bringing people out into the mountains might have to include "but only up to a certain limit ...", he would argue that some areas must be free of all concessions to the ease of access, or commercial development of their natural resources; but he would also be in favour of areas where the non-mountaineers, the less agile, the as-yet-only vaguely-interested would be encouraged to come and enjoy a less arduous contact with nature. A system of parks of various types can make that possible.

It has to be said that not everyone agrees with that version of how John Muir would respond to today's conservation/tourism dilemmas. His name is being flown on the anti-park banners too. And while I was impressed with Yosemite National Park's handling of huge visitor numbers through appropriate policies and management, I was slightly disappointed that the interpretive provision had no new insights to offer. Maybe I expected too much from this "Mecca"? A rather dated-looking plaque describes the beginnings:

Park Interpretation

Here beneath Yosemite's cliffs, an inspiration became a reality. Sensing that nature is more appreciated when it is understood, National Park Service director, Stephen T. Mather in 1920 persuaded Dr and Mrs C.M. Goethe to try at Yosemite the "Nature Guide" movement they had imported from Europe. The programme was an immediate success, first on a seasonal basis conducted by Harold C. Bryant and Loye H. Miller and, later, as a full time activity under Park Naturalist, Ansel F. Hall. As a result, men in uniform in every National Park stand ready to help you understand and appreciate your heritage.

The rangers are very helpful but I'm not too keen on uniformed men (or women). And the site of "enforcement rangers" with guns on the hip is very hard to take.

Michael Cohen, author of a great book on John Muir "The Pathless Way", is far more critical. "But really, it is 'interpretation' rather than the Yosemite experience alone that he attacks; But the Visitors' Centre at Tuolumne Meadows was a disappointment. Certainly the building itself had been cleaned and painted. The new exhibit cases were professionally done, and the large canvas banners with

quotations from Muir's writings provided some food for thought, but they had been selected only for their superficial references to Tuolumne, not because they had something special to teach. I thought little of the many colour photographs, which were so unnecessary since the scenes they depicted were available in Nature right outside the door. By far the most upsetting part of the exhibit was the trays containing "natural objects" like pine cones, rocks, deer horns, staghorn lichen, and even a small patch of bear skin for the visitor to touch. What was the point I wondered, when outside the windows all of these were available in the forest in their natural and appropriate setting?"

.... Inside the Visitors' Centre one could learn quite a bit about the natural history of tourism, I supposed And people were happy there, with other humans safely surrounding them. Perhaps they even preferred to see the forest through the windows Maybe I was made uncomfortable; uncomfortable not only by seeing Nature enclosed in showcases, but by seeing naturalists imprisoned in the Visitor Centre.

... I realised that Muir's spirit had been lost too ... A Visitors' Centre ought to teach people how to see, and ought further to explain what Muir had called, 'the right manners of the wilderness,' ... the focus could have been on a guide to vision, perhaps to Muir's vision, but in any case a means to turn the tourist into a visitor and a visitor into someone capable of dwelling in the



With guidebook and gun, N.P. Rangers

Frank Howie

(Tuolumne) meadows ... A Visitor Centre ought to allow humans who have been alienated from nature to reinhabit the Earth. Wasn't that the purpose of National Parks? Wasn't that what Muir had thought?"

Whatever the outcome of the debate John Muir's ideas deserve to be better known outside the U.S.A. And he himself offers a remarkable example to anyone who cares about the land.

Books by and on John Muir
(All from University of Wisconsin Press Ltd., London)

The Story of my Boyhood and Youth
by John Muir. (Also available from Canongate Publishers Edinburgh)

The Pathless Way
John Muir and the American Wilderness
by Michael Cohen

The Life of John Muir
by Linnie Marsh Wolfe

Summering in the Sierra
John Muir

To Yosemite and Beyond
John Muir

John of the Mountains
Ed. Linnie Marsh Wolfe

Our National Parks
John Muir

LORD MONTAGU'S SPEECH AT THE INTERPRET BRITAIN AWARDS CEREMONY. 26th JANUARY 1989.

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am, of course, delighted to be here today to present the awards and support the work of the Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage.

Neil Cossons and Geoffrey Lord will remember that the last occasion on which we all met was last year's International Conference on Heritage Presentation and Interpretation at Warwick. All of us were involved as Keynote Speakers, Financial Underwriters or Organisers of that very successful event.

During the week of the conference delegates were lectured at, demonstrated to and discussed every aspect of the International Heritage Scene. Today we are focussing in on what has been happening in the U.K. and, whilst not entirely forgetting the philosophical issues, looking especially at examples of good practice in interpretation.

The Interpret Britain Awards are now in their fifth year and can rightly claim to be an established part of what we call the Heritage Industry. They recognise the endeavours of everyone who is involved in presenting the Heritage to the public and cover an increasingly wide range of media. To win an award is to gain recognition from the industry of a job well done and I heartily congratulate all those who have gained awards and commendations today.

I should also like to say how pleased I am that Gateway Foodmarkets Ltd, who have been tremendous supporters of English Heritage, are also involved in these awards.

In both my private capacity as owner of Beaulieu and in my official role as Chairman of English Heritage, I am deeply committed to Interpretation, not just as a means of improving the short term viability of Heritage sites but as a means of

building long term commitment to the Heritage movement. I am happy to support any activity that leads to better practice. Essentially Interpretation is about helping visitors to a fuller understanding and enjoyment of the Heritage. Indeed, such words are used in the National Heritage Act to describe the responsibilities of English Heritage in respect of the built and historic environment. At English Heritage we have one of the largest teams of interpreters in Britain and I was relieved to see that the judges share my view that in at least one medium we are doing a commendable job.

The role of the judges is a difficult one. There are no fixed rules to follow to carry out good Interpretation so their decisions must always contain an element of subjective judgement. One of the strengths of the Awards Scheme is that the judges have to comment on their decisions. Entrants who fail to win awards then have the stimulus to re-appraise their work and hopefully improve aspects of it. At the very

least the judges' comments provoke debate - sometimes heated debate - about how interpretation should or should not be carried out. Such a debate helps everyone to move forward to achieve higher standards.

There should be no doubt about the need for higher standards. Whether we are talking about the natural or man-made heritage, its long-term preservation for the enhancement and enrichment of future generations depends on more people understanding it, valuing it, and enjoying it NOW. In seeking to attract these people, we are competing with the rapidly growing and sophisticated leisure industry. We are unlikely to compete in terms of capital investment but we can compete in terms of commitment, creativity and professionalism. The commitment has always been there. As you will see when you look at the exhibition of winners, the Interpret Britain Awards Scheme promotes professionalism and stimulates creativity. I hope it will be a long lasting stimulant for everyone.



Elizabeth Newberry and Lord Montagu. (Photo - Laurence Photography)

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

1989 promises to be an important year in the development of the Society. There are some significant points to bring to your attention:-

- We have secured a generous 2 year sponsorship deal with Gateway Foodmarkets Ltd., for the Interpret Britain Award Scheme. This will build on the developments that were possible between 1984 and 1988 with the support of The Carnegie United Kingdom Awards Trust. I would like to place on record our gratitude to Geoffrey Lord,

Secretary to the Trust, for his support and guidance.

- We plan to appoint a full time Development Officer in the early summer, and some part-time clerical support, to be based in the Bellhouse Building at Manchester Polytechnic, the home of C.E.I.
- The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust have commissioned Martin Orrom to undertake a feasibility study into the opportunities for closer links between S.I.B.H. and C.E.I. We welcome this initiative and will keep communication with you, our members, over progress.

With these and other initiatives I believe our Society can go from strength to strength, providing a service to you, the members, and to interpretation. Any views on our future are always welcomed - either directly to committee members, or in the pages of this journal, and it certainly helps our decision making.

Meanwhile, out there "at the interface" carry on interpreting in a way which is creative, stimulating, and most of all, FUN.

Ian Solly

(See picture on back page - Ed.)

NEWS ON SOCIETY EVENTS

INDUSTRY, IMAGE AND INTERPRETATION, Bristol, 14-16 April. Although only a few days away it's still worth checking to see whether there are places left on this important national conference. With speakers from ETB, CBI, British Telecom, Eurotunnel, L&R Leisure, Cheshire County Council, Dartington Crystal and Badgerline, the event provides a rare opportunity to focus on interpretation in the growing field of industrial tourism. It should be enjoyable too - we have arranged visits to Smiles Brewery, Harvey's Wine Museum, SS Great Britain and Bristol Industrial Museum and organised a practical project on a site in Bristol City centre. Details: Stephen Woollett, Olde Bakery, Old Road, Harbertonford, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 7TA. Tel: 080 423 668.

A NEW LOOK AT COALBROOKDALE, Ironbridge, 27 April. Jointly with the Ironbridge Institute, SIBH has arranged a fascinating day's study of Coalbrookdale. The aim of the course is to look at how different aspects of Coalbrookdale's natural and built environment are interpreted and to what extent the inter-relationships between them should be emphasised. The day, which takes the form of a walk through the Dale and a series of talks and discussions should be of interest to anyone concerned with an integrated approach to interpretation. Details: Sue Miller, The Ironbridge Institute, Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Ironbridge, Telford, Shropshire, TF8 7AW. Tel: 0952 45 2093/4

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES - LESSONS FOR INTERPRETERS "Involving the community", "recruiting volunteers", "making use of local expertise and knowledge", "raising the awareness of local people to their surroundings" These are often aspects of an interpreters brief or job description. So its surprising that in the past that there has been so little contact between those involved in community work and interpreters. A recent course, jointly organised by SIBH and CEI, has helped to fill this gap. And it seems to have been successful. Participants came from a wide range of organisations and backgrounds including a Groundwork Trust, Country Parks, Museums and Rural Community Councils. That in itself was valuable. But more importantly the course demonstrated that there really was a lot of common ground between the two fields. How to work with local groups?, how to enable a community to identify its needs and solutions? how to help people to have genuine "ownership" of a local project? Just some of the questions the course began to consider.

The course had a relaxed and informal style which allowed participants the opportunity to express their own personal concerns and dilemmas and admit to their strengths and weaknesses. Its a style which

many hoped some future SIBH events would echo.

NEW CONTACT ON SIBH EVENTS From April onwards your new but temporary contact on SIBH Events will be Gillian Binks at CEI (Bellhouse Building, Lower Ormond St., Manchester, M15 6BX - 061 228 6171). This will be until a new full-time Development/Events Officer is in post. However do please continue to offer your ideas and your help, however modest it might seem.
Stephen Woollett.

Sour notes in the Music of Time.

Dear Sir,
I refer to the article by Simon Berry on pp11 and 12 of the 'Winter' edition and entitled 'Dances to the music of time' which apparently first appeared in the 'Scotsman', though we did not see it there.

Firstly, we take exception to the reference to this Trust, in which we are coupled with Scottish Development Department, Historic Buildings and Monuments Division as 'having recently moved into interpreting history as part of a new approach to the buildings in our care'. Whilst that may be true of SDD, I think it would be fair to say that the National Trust for Scotland was a pioneer in the field some twenty years ago, and every year sees major interpretive provisions being made a range of our properties - your Society has both recognised and printed articles on individual schemes on more than one occasion.

Secondly, there is surely something illogical about the figures quoted for the development at Butlins, Ayr, in the first and third paragraphs - they appear not to tally.

We feel the undoubtedly interesting subject matter of this article was not properly checked, and would request appropriate reference and correction be made in the next issue of the magazine.

Thank you for your attention.

Douglas Bremner

Head of Interpretation/Presentation. The National Trust for Scotland, 5 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH2 4DU.

DIARY DATES

APRIL 10-14. Marketing for countryside recreation. Losehill Hall, Derbys. Details: Peter Townsend (0433) 20373.

APRIL 14-16. SIBH Annual Conference and AGM, Interpreting Business and Industry. University of Bristol. Details: Stephen Woollett. (See above).

APRIL 16-18. Interpretive Planning in the Countryside. Juniper Hall, Surrey. Details: (0306) 883849.

APRIL 22 - MAY 1st. Environmental Week including Operation Eyesore, a Civic Trust initiative.

Details: Angela Carvill 01-930 0914.

APRIL 27. Environmental Education Workshop. Preston, Lancs.

Details: TRA Associates (0204) 40062.

APRIL 27-29. Building a Better Britain Exhibition. Business Design Centre, Islington. Details: Civic Trust 01-930 0914.

MAY 14-18. Fourth International Symposium on Zoo Design. Paignton Zoo, Devon. Details: (0803) 557479.

MAY 22. Supporting and Funding the Heritage in the 1990's - DIY or Die? Details: Mrs C. Downs (0590) 66222.

MAY 22. Moorlands Past and Present. Integrated use of moorland landscapes with emphasis on interpretation and education. Losehill Hall, Derbys.

Details: Ken Smith (0433) 20373.

JULY 7-9. Earth Education Basic Workshop. Acclimatization approach to Environmental Education, Losehill Hall, Derbys. Details: Peter Townsend (0433) 20373.

PUBLICATIONS

SMALL WONDER by Mari Friend from Bug Box Optix, 17 Castle View Park, Mawnan Smith, Nr. Falmouth TR11 5HB.

Unlike most of the wildlife she writes about, Mari Friend is rare. And in a world of increasing specialisms and sophisticated techniques her latest publication is a joy to read - as David Bellamy says in his foreword, 'a resource book overflowing with facts and fascination'.

The reason for Mari Friend's rarity lies in her superb ability to take a natural history subject and make it simultaneously interesting and intelligible.

The book studies a wide range of common plants and animals. The reader is treated to straightforward and illuminating accounts of the life-cycle and habits of frogs and toads, mayflies, bees, snails and other animals accompanied by equally effective line illustrations.

'Living in a Dump' looks at life to be found in a compost heap; other parts invite the reader to undertake projects and conduct simple observation of nature.

In loose-leaf format, SMALL WONDER is made up of six sections and a further ten pack's are available which extend the range of projects. There is an invitation to copy the pages for educational purposes (and I hope this will be sensibly used).

Visitors who were privileged to see the Countryside Centre Mari and her husband John set up just outside Bradford will know of the kindness, respect and consideration which she encourages in all she meets. This book is a remarkable translation of that philiosophy.

Copies of the book - well thumbed - deserve to be found on shelves in schools and visitor centres. They should also become reference works which parents can share with their children; encouraging them to discover the great wonders of nature which Mari Friend makes so understandable.

Bill Breakell

TAMING THE FLOOD - A history and natural history of rivers and wetlands. Jeremy Purseglove. OUP in Association with Channel Four. 1988. £17.50 Hardback.

This is a terrific book by an author who is passionately involved in the subject matter and who has campaigned ceaselessly on behalf of the water environment for many years. His commitment and enthusiasm blaze from the pages, in stark contrast to the recent television series on the same theme in which his natural exuberance had been stifled by misguided direction, presumably in the hope of making the programmes more 'serious'. But the book is a worthy testimonial to the man and his work.

Despite its eight chapters, the book really divides into three parts. The first is a survey and a celebration of rivers and wetlands as part of the history and cultural heritage of England and Wales. This part is fascinating and should rank alongside the work of Oliver Rackham on woodland and Max Hooper on hedgerows, in interpreting the landscape bequeathed to us from past times.

The middle section of the book takes us into the modern world of those who manage our rivers and wetlands. As an insider, Jeremy Purseglove is a very knowledgeable guide indeed, and, from his stance as a conservationist, he lifts the lid from many shameful episodes and points a fearless finger at those he believes are responsible. British agricultural policy especially land drainage policy feel the lash of his tongue. Having scorned the orthodox approach and exposed its weaknesses, the author draws from local and international examples to offer a blueprint for more sympathetic wetland management. Here he does not advocate conservation solely as an intrinsic good but provides many examples of how wetland resources can make an economic contribution to life in the twentieth century. A thoughtful approach to retaining wetlands might see them used for root zone sewage treatment, as willow coppices for biomass fuel, as plots for specially adapted fodder crops and for more traditional uses such as willow for weaving, reed for thatch and meadows for flower-rich hay. Perhaps the most memorable sequence from the companion television series was of the author/presenter wading in a shallow pool collecting medicinal leeches by allowing them to become attached to his bare legs. Leeches are evidently still used in modern medicine and research as a source of the anti-coagulant hirudin, and a firm in Slough imports 5,000 a year for medical purposes.

These chapters would repay a read by those members working in folk or farming museums, especially those who might be considering how traditional methods of husbandry might be revived in a self-financing way.

The author mentions tourism and visits to natural areas as a source of income and cites Martin Mere, near Southport, as a

prime example. On the strength of income from 185,000 visitors per year the Wildfowl Trust has been able to invest in recreating the habitat for birds. He takes a passing glance at Ironbridge Museum: nothing wrong with it in itself but "should the unwary tourist creep behind these stage sets evoking a landscape in which man and nature are in harmony, he will be brought up against the fast vanishing reality".

Amberley Wildbrooks, the Somerset Levels and the Halvergate Marshes are appraised for the issues they raised and the lessons which were painfully learned. To close, the author looks at Privatisation of the Water Industry and the reforms which it might bring. It is no exaggeration to say that the more sensitive codes of practice which will stem from the 1989 Water Act owe some of their content to the practical methods and the campaigning conducted by Jeremy Purseglove.

By reason of its subject matter and its style, the book is very readable; a compelling blend of ecology, country lore, engineering, politics and poetry. Literary allusions abound - not to demonstrate the author's obvious erudition but to make telling points about the Englishman's relationship with the land. Notwithstanding the quotations from everyone who has ever said anything lyrical about our rivers, the author employs a not inconsiderable writing style of his own. Extracts from scientific papers sit happily alongside quotes from Gerald Manley Hopkins or John Clare. In January this year, the book was outright winner of the Sir Peter Kent Conservation Book Prize.

"Over the past ten years, some very questionable European seed mixtures have been marketed as native English wild flowers; now that this has been virtually stopped, it would seem wrong to export our own seed. However, it may be that there is a foreign market among the anglophile gardeners of the eastern United States. The product would not then be wild-flower seed - they have their own appropriate American species - but the harvest of a haymeadow beside the Thames which has been managed since the days of King Alfred - the epitome of the Englishness of England, which we know has an emotional value both at home and abroad, and, consequently, if only we use our imagination, a hard commercial value as well". This extract, from the chapter called Riverside Riches, is typical of the intricate weaving together of natural science, economics, romanticism, awareness and common-sense which permeates the book. A paperback version is urgently needed to ensure that a wider readership is exposed to the author's talent.

Ken Jackson.

MEETING THE PUBLIC: Handbook for staff on the art of building good relations with customers by Marista Leishman (The Institute Trust, Hunter's House, 508 Lanark Road, Edinburgh EH14 5DH).

This book forms part of a training package for interpreters, especially those who deal with the public in a face-to-face situation.

The notes are in sections on:

1. the visiting public;
2. the job of guiding staff;
3. pitfalls for guiding staff;
4. guided tours and room staff;
5. reception staff; the telephone;
6. Summary.

At first glance it may not appear to say very much that is new, especially to those who have learnt to take short cuts. But those who may have lost some of the excitement of successfully engaging a visitor and involving them in a story and, more significantly, those involved in training others - whether formally or simply in 'passing on tips' - will find the principles in this book worth a closer look. And although some readers may say "Well, I knew that", that fact is that many, many interpreters forget who they are supposed to be stimulating, entertaining and educating.

This book, therefore, takes us back to basics and it would be no bad thing if we each took a copy, locked ourselves away for an hour or so, and - free from embarrassment - asked ourselves if we are meeting the basic needs of our visitors.

Such questions can be painful, but nevertheless sometimes need asking.

Unfortunately, the illustrations in particular emphasise a somewhat traditional view of guides in historic houses but this obstacle should not deter would-be-users.

Once a year, or once a day, a glance at 'Meeting the Public' will perhaps be a humbling experience. But it may make each of us a better interpreter.

Bill Breakell

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

TIME TO LEARN - A guide to residential study breaks, summer schools and study tours. Only £1.50 (inc. p&p). From National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, Leicester.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION. Published by the Council for the Environmental Education, Reading. £10.00. 48pp plus 12pp supplement.

THE ENVIRONMENT DIGEST. A monthly digest of environmental news. Individuals £12 for 12 copies, Institutions £30. Subscription only.

MUSEUMS ALIVE! A guide to the museums and art galleries of Yorkshire and Humberside. Free from Y&H Museums Council, Farnley Hall, Hall Lane, Leeds LS12 5HA.

COUNTRYSIDE DIRECTORY. A guide to farm and countryside visitor attractions to coincide with Food and Farming Year. Sphere Books. March 1989.

IN THE NEWS

Museums Association to establish Museum Training Institute.

The Museums Association announced in January its intention to establish a new Museum Training Institute, to develop training standards and training programmes for museum and gallery staff. The Institute, which will be a charitable subsidiary company of the Association, will identify training needs; encourage training and investment in training; and develop national standards for training in the museum field.

The new initiative has been welcomed by Arts Minister, Richard Luce, who announced an immediate grant towards a business plan and the establishment of the Institute. He also indicated his preparedness to provide pump-priming funding for a period of up to five years. The Training Agency and the Museums and Galleries Commission are also supporting the proposal.

The Institute will bring together museums and galleries from the national, local authority and independent sectors in the UK to identify and plan for training needs. It will also produce and market a substantial series of open learning training modules on which work is already well advanced.

Announcing the Association's commitment to establish the Museum Training Institute, Dr. Patrick Boylan, the Association's President said "the announcement of government funding and support marks a breakthrough in providing a new standard and quality of training for museum staff, which will help museums meet the new changes and challenges of the 1990's and beyond."

Staff will shortly be recruited for the Institute, which is expected to be operational in April.

BELLINGHAM TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

A new Interpretation Centre will open in the Bellingham, Northumberland Tourist Information Centre in mid-May 1989. Interpretation covers the fields of Early Man, Farming and Forestry, the town of Bellingham and the railways and industries of the locality. The area includes the Upper North Tyne Valley and Redesdale, including Kielder Forest and Kielder Water, and is one which has undergone an almost total transformation since 1926 when the Forestry Commission started planting and turned the area into what has now become the largest man-made forest in Europe.

Since 1974 the Upper North Tyne Valley has again been totally transformed - by the removal of all the trees from the valley bottom and its flooding to form Kielder Water - and is now a major tourist attraction.

The largest "town" is Bellingham, and it is here that the Tourist Information Centre is situated - run by Tynedale District Council - and here where the new Interpretive Centre is located. Those involved have been C.E.I. and Sue McBride, the designer.

Everything is now in place, in good time for the opening in mid-May 1989.

MUSEUMS ALIVE! - PUTTING YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE ON THE MAP.

Museums in Yorkshire and Humberside will be on everyone's list of places to visit in 1989, thanks to MUSEUMS ALIVE!, a special promotional project initiated by the Yorkshire & Humberside Museums Council and the Museums & Galleries Commission.

MUSEUMS ALIVE! aims to raise the public's awareness of the area's wealth of museums and what they have on offer. The region is justly famous for the award-winning National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford; the ever-popular Castle Museum and the crowd-pulling Jorvik Viking Centre in York.

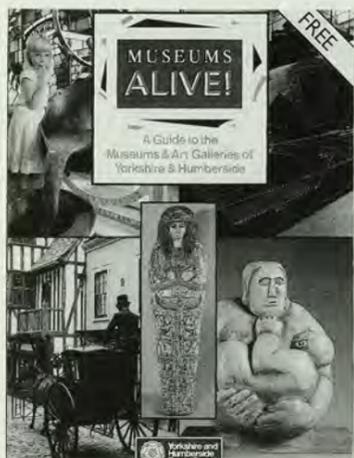
But there are over 200 more museums and art galleries looking at all aspects of life in Yorkshire and Humberside, whose imaginative and energetic exhibitions delight and entertain the tourist.

Major highlights of MUSEUMS ALIVE! running for extended periods through the year include the **Treasures of Yorkshire and Humberside** exhibition at the Yorkshire Museum, York; **Of Curiosities and Rare Things**, an exhibition at Leeds City Museum drawing on 300 years of Leeds museums; **The Great Sheffield Picture Show** at Kelham Island Museum in Sheffield, the largest exhibition ever held of Sheffield scenes from oil paintings to videos; and **A Magnet for Dust and Dead Flies?**, Scunthorpe Museum's special exhibition showing the lively face of their museum.

Other focal points for 1989 include the opening of a brand new Museum of Transport in Hull; extensions to such as the Bradford Industrial Museum; and the new Kodak Museum opening at the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television.

For more details about MUSEUMS ALIVE! please contact: Delma Tomlin, Co-ordinator, Museums Alive!, 65 Rawcliffe Lane, York YO3 6SJ. Tel: 0904-645738.

Press information is available from: Sarah Derbyshire, Media Co-ordinator Museums Alive!, Mill Houses, Great Habton, Malton YO17 0TZ. Tel: 065386 - 303.



NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOR ENGLISH HERITAGE.

English Heritage (the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England) has appointed a new Chief Executive, Miss Jennifer Page, who will succeed Mr Peter Rumble when he retires in late April 1989. Jennifer Page, who is 44 years old, worked as a senior civil servant in Whitehall from 1968 to 1981 and subsequently, on secondment, in Britoil and the London Docklands Development Corporation. In 1984, she joined the newly created international financial services group, Pallas, where she is Senior Vice President of what is now a \$500 million group. Jennifer Page's appointment as Chief Executive of English Heritage, which is made with the agreement of the Secretary of State for the Environment, will be for a period of 5 years.

LINDISFARNE EXHIBITION

Over 1000 years of a glorious history are celebrated in a new permanent exhibition at **Lindisfarne Priory** on Holy Island, Northumbria. Opened in July 1988 by the Bishop of Durham, it tells the story of the monastic settlement that became the symbol of Christianity in the North. Exhibits housed in the museum building include reproductions of the beautifully illuminated manuscript, the Lindisfarne Gospels, as well as crosses and headstones from the Priory's Anglo-Saxon period. Other displays include the cult of St. Cuthbert, Lindisfarne's bishop in 685AD, featured with vocal background of monastic music, and the turbulent period of the Viking attacks in the 8th century.

MUSEUMS YEAR 1989

The designation of 1989 as Museums Year is in recognition of the centenary of the Museums Association, the world's first national museums & galleries organisation.

H.R.H The Duchess of York has agreed to be Patron of the Year and will participate personally in the celebrations.

The major aims of Museums Year are to enhance public perception of museums & galleries and encourage public and private investment in Britain's Heritage.

The celebrations planned by the United Kingdom's 200 museums and galleries, throughout 1989, will endeavour to meet these aims. Museums and galleries will be providing an open invitation to the general public and private and public sector industry to utilize and enjoy the resources which museums and galleries house.

Thousands of special events, exhibitions and activities will be staged by museums and galleries, large and small, throughout Britain. There will also be a programme of extension and refurbishment and the opening of major new museums and galleries.

For further information regarding Museums Year contact Suzanne Welberry, Spero Communications 01 538 9946 or Camilla Boodle, Museums Association 01 404 4767.

UNESCO SEMINAR ON THE INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCEPTS IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING.

The Unesco seminar on the integration of environmental concepts in university teaching will take place in Brussels from June 7-10, 1989 under the auspices of the Department of Human Ecology at the Free University Brussels. It is of interest for all ecologists but also, of course, for human ecologists.

There is an increasing trend to implement courses on both basic ecology and human ecology in different university faculties and at different levels of university education. According to this background the seminar aims to examine the general and course specific concepts, priority needs, contents, and main lines of structure of university courses on environmental problems.

The programme includes background papers from UNESCO ecologists and human ecologists, a session on "University teaching on environmental problems in the life sciences", a session dedicated to postgraduate teaching, a session on "literature handling, data bases and pedagogic tools for environmental education", as well as a session dedicated to the international cooperation on environmental education.

Info: Dr. L. Hens, Human Ecology, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Plieann 2, B-1050 Brussel, BELGIUM.

PERMANENT FARM ATTRACTION FOR ALTON TOWERS.

A permanent farm display on a 10 acre site recently opened at Alton Towers in Staffordshire. Over 2 million people will visit the farm each year. This new star feature at Britain's biggest tourist attraction has been sponsored by the Britannia Building Society, for what is believed to be a six figure sum.

Alton Towers' in-house design team have been advised by the Macclesfield Groundwork Trust, who were responsible for the farm at the Stoke-on-Trent Garden Festival in 1986, and by the organisers of the farm exhibit at last year's Glasgow Garden Festival.

The farm will concentrate on the hi-tech aspects of farming using "ultra-modern" methods of presentation, including holograms, to present the world of farming to visitors.

The site allocated for the farm is adjacent to Tower Street, the main street at Alton Towers.

Lord Stafford, Chairman of the local British Food & Farming Year committee is delighted with the news. "It is a major boost to Staffordshire's efforts in 1989 but, as a high proportion of the Alton Towers visitors come considerable distances from all over the UK, it will also have a major impact on the general public nationally. Already local farmers are offering their services to help man the farm at peak times to answer visitor "questions," he says. The farm was completed by the time Alton Towers opened for the new season on 18 March 1989, and will continue as a permanent feature after British Food & Farming Year.

ORDINARY PEOPLE MUSEUM

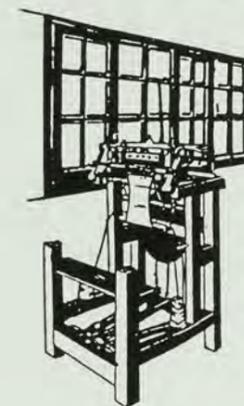
At the end of 1988 the City of **Edinburgh District Council** opened a new museum based on the lives, work and pastimes of

ordinary people in the city from the late 18th century to the present day. Details: Helen Clark/Elaine Finnie, Social History Section, Huntly House Museum, 142 Canongate, Edinburgh, 031-225 2424.

WILLIAM LEE 400th ANNIVERSARY APPEAL

In 1989 two important events occur - the Quatercentenary of the hand knitting frame and the Coming of Age of the Ruddington Framework Knitters' Museum.

Four hundred years ago, William Lee of Calverton, Nottinghamshire, invented the handframe and an ambitious programme



of events commemorating this event and its resultant major impact on the economy, abroad and in this country, is being given world-wide publicity via the trade, tourism, education and other media. Since 1971 at Ruddington, Notts the Framework Knitter's Museum have accomplished a great deal and have been recipients of two prestigious national awards.

As a contribution to William Lee Year, the Museum has organised a programme of events and have launched an appeal for funds. Details from the Museum (0602) 846914.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH SERVICE

The Conservation Trust has been providing help, advice and information on environmental matters to many thousands of enquirers for the last 18 years. Its educational publications are used in many schools and colleges and its educational newsletter is now sent regularly on subscription to over 60% of all educational establishments in the UK. It has a rapidly growing membership of individuals and organisations from all walks of life, including the educational, scientific and commercial worlds. As a result the Trust has built up many contacts, much expert knowledge, a wealth of statistical and factual information, and considerable experience in the environmental field. As part of the Trust's policy of expanding its services an **Environmental Research Service** has been introduced. The initial funding for this was provided by the Environmental Research Trust.

Details from: The Conservation Trust, National Environmental Education Centre, George Palmer Site, Northumberland Avenue, Reading, RG2 7PW. Telephone: Reading (0734) 868442



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CADBURY VISITOR CENTRE

The wonderful world of chocolate will be celebrated in a new visitor centre housed in one of Bournville's converted cocoa processing plants in Birmingham.

'Cadbury World' will attract thousands of visitors to the place where it all began with exhibitions in the five-storey chocolate factory telling the mouth-watering story of cocoa. There will be a museum tracing the commercial and industrial history of the Cadbury company, which is now the chocolate division of Cadbury Schweppes. Visitors will also be offered restaurant and shopping facilities and a children's play area.

The Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage

President: The Rev. and Rt. Hon. Lord Sandford DSC.
The Society was formed in 1975 to:

* provide a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas on the interpretation of Britain's Heritage, both urban and rural;

* disseminate knowledge of interpretive philosophy, principles and techniques;
* to promote the value and role of interpretation to those involved with recreation management, conservation, education, tourism and public relations in national and local government, charitable bodies and private organisations.

Annual subscription rates, Individual UK £12.00, Library

£7.00, Corporate £30.00, Student £6.00, Overseas £12.00 (£16 airmail).

The views expressed in articles and reports are not necessarily those of the Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage.

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